Two tribesmen shot dead in Sukkur ambush

By Our Correspondent

SUKKUR: Two members of the Bugti tribe were killed when the car they were travelling by was ambushed near the main bus stand in Sukkur on Sunday, police said.

Officials at the Tamachani police station said that the assailants targeted the car when it was passing by the bus stand. The armed men opened an indiscriminate fire killing Balach and Khamiso, both members of the Bugti tribe, on the spot, they said, and linked the attack with the tribesmen's enmity with a Mazari family.

The deceased were residents of the Sui area of Balochistan, the police said, adding that they intended to take a relative, Umer Hayat Bugti, to a private hospital in Sukkur for treatment.

The Sukkur police cordoned off the area and mounted a hunt for the attackers.

The bodies were taken to a nearby government hospital for a postmortem examination.

Man, girl die in road accident

A man and a young girl were killed when a passenger van overturned near Jacobabad's toll plaza on Sunday.

Officials at the Abad police station said that 14 other passengers were injured in the accident. They said the speeding van, on its way to Sukkur from Jacobabad, overturned after one of its tyres got burst.

Three of the injured victims, were referred to the Chandka Medical College Hospital due to their critical condition. The girl, Zainab Khoso, succumbed to her injuries on the way. Another injured victim, Ghulam Rasool Marfani, was transported to the Jacobabad Civil Hospital, where he also died during treatment a little later.

Over 300 animals perish as container overturns

By Our Correspondent

NAWABSHAH: Over 300 goats and sheep perished and five men were injured when a container-mounted trailer overturned near Qazi Ahmed town on Sunday.

The injured were taken to the Qazi Ahmed Taluka Hospital for treatment.

In another accident, near the same town on the highway, a collision between a container-mounted trailer and a passenger van left 15 people injured on Sunday, APP adds.

Motoryway Police said that the speeding van hit the trailer and overturned causing injuries to its 15 occupants. The victims were taken to the taluka hospital, where doctors referred four of them to the Peoples Medical University Hospital, Nawabshah, due to their critical condition.

Three police recruits looted

DADU: Three police recruits were robbed of their personal belongings at gunpoint along the Sehwan-Jamshoro section of the Indus Highway on Sunday.

The victims, Kashan Memon, Murtaza Solangi and Ejaz Lundo, lodged a complaint at the Khanot police station stating that the armed muggers held them at gunpoint, harassed and then deprived them of their mobile phones, cash and other belongings before taking away their motorcycle.

Jamshoro SSP Zafar Siddique later ordered the Khanot police to take action for the arrest of the muggers. —Correspondent

HYDERABAD: Workers clean the floor of Akram Wah — a left bank canal of Kotri Barrage — ahead of the official release of water. Like many other canals, Akram Wah has also been de-silted and cleared of mud during the ongoing annual closure of irrigation channels.—Umair Ali

Rs750m initiative launched to 'revolutionise date palm sector'

Pakistan Agricultural Research Council and Shah Abdul Latif University sign MoU on NA Standing Committee's recommendation

Dawn Report

LARKANA: In line with a decision taken at the Dec 5, 2024 meeting of National Assembly's Standing Committee on Food Security and Research, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed for a Rs750 million project to transform date palm sector and conduct advanced research.

Under the MoU, elite date palm varieties would be evaluated, optimal production ensured and post-harvest technologies introduced while keeping focus on value addition.

A sub-committee of the NA Standing Committee has endorsed the plan for the strengthening of the Date Palm Research Institute, Khairpur, while signing the MoU with the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) and Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU).

The second meeting of the sub-committee was held at the secretariat of the university's Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Yousuf Khushk a few days back.

Presided over by sub-committee member Syed Javed Ali Shah Jillani, the session focused solely on to strengthen the Khairpur institute through a joint venture between PARC and SALU.

The MoU was signed by SALU VC Prof Khushk and PARC Chairman Dr Syed Murtaza Hassan Andrabi.

"The MoU formalises a strategic partnership aimed at revolutionising the date palm sector in Khairpur and surrounding regions," says a SALU release.

MNA Jillani said the MoU was ready with the consent of both parties. He emphasised that the resulting research must be conducted to enhance crop production, introduce climate-resilient technology and safeguard farmers' livelihoods against challenges, like climate change.

The ambitious project, with an estimated cost of Rs750 million, as per the PC-I, has clear objectives to evaluate and propagate elite date palm varieties, develop optimal production and post-harvest technologies, and focus on value addition, says the MNA.

A core goal is to position Khairpur as an international hub for dates by maximising its export potential, he added.

Other committee members Syed Abrar Ali Shah, Nazir Ahmed Bhugio and Zulfiqar Ali Behan lauded the initiative and stressed the need for strengthening agricultural research in Sindh for the benefit of farmers and country.

With both parliamentary endorsement and a formal institutional agreement now in place, the project moves into the implementation phase, marking a concerted national effort to drive research-led agricultural transformation in one of Pakistan's key date-producing regions, according to them.

Prof Khushk termed the MoU signing "great news for the New Year". He highlighted the plans to strengthen existing laboratories for advanced research on date palm.

The VC and subcommittee members noted that the MoU outlined a comprehensive roadmap for collaboration. The key initiatives included upgrading of Khairpur's Date Palm Research Institute into a 'Centre for Date Palm Research and Post-harvest Management' and establishing model farms for elite varieties on 400-600 acres of SALU's land.

PARC Chairman Dr Andrabi described the MoU as a "first step towards reviving the sector", underscoring the need for a complete value chain and potential private-sector partnerships.

A representative of the Khairpur Chamber of Commerce recounted the region's substantial contribution with an annual production of 750,000 tonnes of dates.

Following the meeting, the sub-committee members and officials visited the Khairpur institute and the Shadi Shaheed site of SALU.

Sindhi women were more independent 50 years ago, conference told

Speakers stress official support, measures for empowerment of rural women; feudalist system, religious constraints blamed for persistent regression

By Our Staff Correspondent

HYDERABAD: Sindhi rural women were more independent 50 years ago, but today they are facing increasingly difficult conditions.

This was claimed by Sindhi Association of North America (Sana) President Dr Maqbool Halepoto while addressing a conference, titled 'Economic empowerment of Sindhi women in 21st century', organised by the association at the Sindh Museum on Saturday.

What is alarming is that instead of making progress, society appears to be regressing further; awareness must be created among women to ensure equal rights, according to Dr Halepoto, who believes that awakening of women folk is the most important prerequisite for the progress of any society.

Environmentalist Naseer Memon said that the Hindu community in the subcontinent was quite progressive before the Partition, and claimed that in that era Sindh had consistently been progressing socially as well.

He said that Sindh of that era was socially more progressive as, according to him, women remained actively engaged in entrepreneurship and society was also comparatively more open.

He recalled that ladies' clubs functioned during that period, but after the Partition, migration of Hindu families led to the emergence of a particular religious environment, especially during the era of General Ziaul Haq, resulting in multilayered oppression of women.

Mr Memon, however, noted that over the last 10 to 15 years, women had begun taking business initiatives and pursuing higher education. He added that hundreds of women were now seeking admission abroad.

He said that while rural women had historically been facing dominance of waderas (feudal lords), besides religious constraints, this segment was now showing signs of progress.

Women's rights activist Amar Sindhu said that in practical terms, women in Sindh continued to live under pressure and distress, as their conditions had largely remained unchanged.

She said that Sindhi women remained missing from the political, literary, and social landscape.

She remarked that while the recovery of a mutilated body of a missing person becomes an issue, this "missing female segment" was not even discussed.

She said that positive thinking was rarely appreciated, while society tended to align itself with a negative mindset.

She said that women remained invisible despite their presence in society, adding that most girls pursued only primary-level education, an issue that needed serious discussion.

She regretted that while female enrolment in universities in other provinces had increased considerably, the number of women students at Sindh University still stood at around 22 per cent.

She called for creating opportunities for women to enable them to excel.

Sana Vice President Shahida Shaikh said that change regarding women was noticeable in Sindh, particularly in the education sector, where women-friendly environment had improved.

She said that women from humble backgrounds had become doctors and professors.

However, in agriculture sector, she said, women working in rural areas had persistently been facing inequality, adding that they did not receive fair wages. She noted that a woman worker's wages were usually paid to her father, husband or brother. She called for the registration of women workers and ensuring their economic empowerment.

She stressed that efforts must be made to safeguard rights of rural women.

Dr Aisha Dharejo said that while urban women had access to some of their rights, rural women still faced tyranny and oppression due to the absence of institutional protection at the government level.

She regretted that government had failed to establish vocational training institutions in rural areas where women could get training of different trades and earn fair returns against their productive works.

North Karachi Industrial Development and Management Company

PREQUALIFICATION OF CONSULTANT

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NKIDMC requires the services of reputed and experienced consultant with the following scope of works/services.

1. Topographic survey, detail design, and supervision for the improvement / construction of roads, sewerage and electrical work in the North Karachi Industrial Area,
2. To prepare detailed cost estimates and drawing in shape of PC-I.
3. To prepare tender documents for inviting bids in terms of SEPRA rules.
4. To examine and evaluate technical and financial proposals received in response to invitations to bid and to supervise and monitor the execution of schemes.
5. Minimum specialization codes of the consultants should be of CE09, CE01, EE06 and CE10

Interested parties may send their proposal to the address given below within 15 days of this advertisement with following details.

1. Name of Consultant with address, telephone number, email address and mobile number.
2. Type of entity (i.e. proprietorship, partnership, Private or Public Ltd Company), along with NTN, Income Tax Statement for last three years, Profile, resume of experts and key personnel proposed to be deputed to the project and details of litigation for default of services (if any).
3. Experience of Consultant with similar projects undertaken and scope of services rendered and date of commencement and completion of such project.
4. Project currently in hand along with scope of service and schedule for completion.

NKIDMC reserves its right to reject or accept any or all proposals for the aforesaid purpose at its discretion.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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OBITUARY

The Partners and staff of the Firm express their deep sorrow and grief on the sad demise of their former Partner

Muhammad Hidayatullah

Mr. Muhammad Hidayatullah joined the firm in 1978. He was admitted to Partnership on January 1,1995 and retired on November 22, 1999.

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